

**The Town Meeting Coordinating Committee Minutes**  
**October 18, 2007**

1. **Meeting** was held at Town Hall in the meeting room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Present for the meeting were: Phil Jackson, Harry Brooks, Otto Stein, Peggy Roberts, Stephanie O’Keeffe, and Carol Gray. The meeting began at 1:38pm.

**2. Minutes of October 11:**

The following changes were made to the minutes: point #2, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, “include” should be “included”; on p. 2, 5 lines up from the bottom, it should read that the warrant review “in the past”; p. 4, it should read “Kris”; under the precinct meeting section, Stephanie said that if TMCC were not able to arrange precinct meetings in every precinct, we should do as was done last year to encourage precincts to hold their own meetings as opposed to having them occur under the auspices of TMCC. She said TMCC should do all precincts or none. Lastly, also under precinct meetings, Marcie’s last name is Sclove.

Phil moved to approve the minutes, Harry seconded, and all voted in favor of approving the minutes.

**3. Warrant Review: October 25, 7-9pm**

Martha Hanner and Barbara Ford of the League of Women Voters are working on the warrant review along with Otto. Peggy said the petition articles are paired up with the Planning Board articles. She called Harrison and he is willing to run the warrant review. Stephanie said she talked to Jonathan Tucker and he was confused because he was talking to numerous people about TMCC events. Otto said there was some confusion regarding whether Jonathan Tucker or Aaron Hayden was presenting. The sense was that the chairs of town committees would be the appropriate people to present at the warrant review. Peggy said she would talk to Jonathan Tucker to clarify this. Regarding the Finance Committee, Peggy said she would call Brian Morton, the Chair of that committee. Carol said she had talked to Vince who said that he would be available to present the petition article about the Professional Research Park / Larkspur Drive; Jim Oldham could present the College Street and South East petition zoning article; and Charlie Traitor could be contacted for the Dickinson Street petition article. These individuals will be contacted to present the respective articles.

Otto asked if all zoning articles should be presented by the Planning Department at once or whether the Planning Department and petition articles related to the same land should be juxtaposed. Carol said she thought it made sense to have the articles that are about the same land be positioned next to each other so the audience would have an easier time keeping the zoning articles straight in their minds. It was pointed out that since the warrant had already come out and the petition articles were next to their Planning Board article counterparts, then it would be easiest to have them presented in that same order.

Phil said it would be good if all TMCC members could be present for the warrant review. People said they would try to be there. Carol said she had a Zoning Board of Appeals hearing that would conflict with the warrant review, but she’d try to get there after the

ZBA hearing. Peggy said normally someone from TMCC and the League of Woman Voters open the warrant review.

#### **4. Bus Tour:**

Peggy asked if Mary Wentworth needed a billing number for the bus tour. Harry said it's all taken care of. Peggy asked if Mary needed to have things duplicated. Harry said Mary would take care of it. Harry said if she needs to copy things, she should get a receipt and turn it in for reimbursement. Peggy said she might also be able to have it copied in Town Hall.

Phil asked who did the bus tour in the past years. People responded that Mary did it the past two years. Phil raised the concern that there were people from the public at one site who met the bus one year and there might have been a problem with advocacy. Carol said she was one of the people who was with a group of people on South East Street who met the bus when that neighborhood was doing a petition article and Mary was excellent at making sure that there was no advocacy.

#### **5. Zoning Orientation Meeting: November 1, 7-9pm.**

The report from the zoning orientation subcommittee summarizing the zoning orientation was reviewed by the group. Otto said he thought it looked good. Peggy asked what the timing of the forum would be. Otto pointed out that that was in the memo. In terms of logistics, Peggy volunteered to do the welcome and the introductions of the panelists. Carol volunteered to be the time keeper and to get short bios on the panelists to Peggy.

It was noted that the second mailing is Monday at noon. Peggy said there will be three things in the packets. There was a brief discussion about whether TMCC was allowed to have one or more pages in the mailing. Peggy said in one conversation she was told to just submit what we had. Peggy said Mary could give her page about the bus tour to the office for copying. Harry said Mary would probably have the map on one side and the articles being looked at on the other side.

Phil raised an issue about subcommittees. He noted it was new to have so many subcommittees. Phil said as a member of the zoning orientation subcommittee, this was the first time he was seeing the outline of what was planned for the program. He said he wasn't included in any of the discussion or apprised of what was done. Carol said he had missed the majority of the meetings (both of the zoning forum subcommittee and then of the TMCC as a whole) where the zoning forum had been discussed. She also pointed out that because of the Open Meeting Law, we are not allowed to do business outside of the public meetings. She said Phil could have called anyone from the committee to ask what he had missed at any given meeting. Harry said regarding the Open Meeting Law, it would be fine for Phil to call any ONE member of the subcommittee to get an update on how things were progressing. Stephanie said she thought the process didn't work very well. She said we tried hard but she would like to see a different process next time. Phil said if we had a public meeting then we should have minutes. Phil made a comparison to the process in which the town was dealing with traffic calming issues. Phil said when you create a subcommittee of four, a different standard should apply.

Harry suggested that we could reevaluate everything about the zoning forum. Otto said with the Warrant Review subcommittee, the charge was to prepare the warrant review. He thinks it is unnecessary to reevaluate how subcommittees work. Peggy said she does think subcommittees should come back to the main committee. Harry moved that we accept the zoning orientation report; Otto seconded the motion.

Phil responded to Carol's concerns about his repeatedly missing meetings by saying that he has served on this committee for two years and when he misses meetings, it's not because he's being irresponsible. He also said he wanted to know if his email sent some time back had violated the Open Meeting Law and if it hadn't, he wanted Carol to apologize to him. He said that since Carol has joined the committee she has "hijacked" the process. He said he wanted that included in the minutes. Harry interjected that it was completely inappropriate for Phil to use that word and he objected. Peggy said everyone needed to get along.

Stephanie said a lot of good points have been made here. She said the main problems with the process had been that we were trying to do this in a small amount of time. At the same time, she noted, we did collaborate and come to agreement. Not everyone gets what they want and that's probably the way it should be. She thinks we should accept the report. We've learned many lessons but that we can't let underlying issues get in the way of the fact that this will be an informative meeting though it's not going to be the perfect meeting. Otto said he agreed with Stephanie.

Carol asked to respond to a couple comments Phil had made. She was responding on the issue of missing meetings and was starting to address Phil's Open Meeting Law point when Peg stopped the discussion saying we needed to proceed. Harry moved the previous question. All voted in favor of accepting the zoning orientation subcommittee's report.

**6. Precinct Forums: agenda item not covered.**

**7. Babysitting:**

Carol presented a 1 and ½ page information sheet and a motion proposal she had typed up based on the discussions of the babysitting subcommittee. Peggy had copied the Town Meeting article from 2005 that addressed the babysitting issues. Carol made the following motion regarding babysitting: *I move that we ask the Town Manager to write a line item expense into the General Government budget for \$1,200 for dependent care for Town Meeting members who rely on such care to attend Town Meeting, or use \$1,200 of any surplus funds now available to address the needs described below.*

Peggy asked about a needs test. Carol explained that the money would be distributed based on the honor system rather than a needs test. Phil asked why we're making this motion when there is already a Town Meeting article. Someone explained that the article was from 2005.

Harry volunteered to try to find out if the \$2,000 discussed in the 2005 Town Meeting article for babysitting was ever budgeted. Peggy pointed out that there was a TMCC

study done of Town Meeting members to assess child care needs. Peggy read information about the study.

Stephanie said she couldn't support the motion to ask the Town Manager to recommend \$1,200 for babysitting. She said she doesn't oppose the concept of babysitting. She said she is holding the Town Departments to very high standards for what their financial needs are and she doesn't think we have a plan for the money yet. She appreciates the concept and trying to carry out something that Town Meeting voted in the past. Otto pointed out that Carol said last time it was just a token thing. Carol agreed but said it was still important to people and it would send a message that we care about increasing diversity in town meeting and making it easier for parents of young children to participate. Phil said he thought the concept was fine, but he had concerns about doing things on quick time frames and he queried whether this was within our purview. For these reasons, he said this is something he can't support. Carol said she would be willing to withdraw the motion if the sense was that people would rather we just discuss the babysitting issue with the Town Manager, rather than making an outright request of him. Peggy said she would like tell the Town Manager what we're working on.

A vote was taken on the babysitting motion. The motion failed, 4-2, with Phil, Stephanie, Otto and Peggy against and Carol and Harry in favor.

(It was agreed later in the meeting that when the Town Manager came to our next meeting, we would not make any requests about money for babysitting, though we could tell the town manager that we had a babysitting subcommittee that was working on the babysitting issue.)

#### **8. Agenda for next meeting with Town Manager:**

Otto asked for clarification regarding what we're going to discuss at the Town Manager meeting. Otto mentioned concerns about committee appointments, mentioning Judy's concern about finance committee appointments. Some were concerned about this idea being mentioned. Peggy asked for us to send ideas to her and we could discuss them at the next meeting. Otto said he does not think it's appropriate to brainstorm issues with the Town Manager. Peggy thinks this is not a good time to do this. We have a lot to do. Otto moved to postpone the visit. Harry objected to postponing the Town Manager visit, noting it's already been postponed twice. There was some discussion. Harry suggested we talk to the Town Manager just to ask him what we can do to help Town Meeting and Town Government. Carol suggested we could get feedback from him about his opinions as to how we could better help Town Meeting run smoothly and we could tell him what our different subcommittees were working on. Otto suggested we all send notes to Peggy and she can sort it out.

Members had to leave the meeting and as there was no longer a quorum, the meeting ended without a motion to adjourn at approximately 3:15 p.m.

Carol Gray, Secretary